

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12 /086 W
-----127768 230941Z /15

O P 230505Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1652

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0505

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG SF WA BC

SUBJ: FOLLOW UP ON PROXIMITY TALKS

REF: (A) STATE 43983, (B) STATE 45043

1. WITH PRESIDENT KHAMA TIED UP IN MORNING CABINET MEETING AND AFTERNOON PARLIAMENT SESSION, I SAW HIS SENIOR PRIVATE SECRETARY, JOE LEGWAILA, TO PRESENT SECRETARY'S EVALUATION OF PROXIMITY TALKS AND PROSPECTS FOR NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT USING REF A TALKING POINTS. SINCE LEGWAILA HAD BEEN PRESENT AT TALKS ALONG WITH MINEXTAFF MOGWE AND RETURNED FROM NEW YORK ONLY LAST FRIDAY, FEB 17, HE WAS WELL-BRIEFED ON WHAT HAD GONE ON IN NEW YORK.

2. LEGWAILA'S FIRST REACTION WAS TO SAY HE FELT TALKING POINTS REFLECTED ACCURATELY THE SITUATION AS GOB DELEGATION SAW IT. HIS ONLY QUESTION WAS WHETHER WALVIS BAY WAS AN ISSUE. FROM BRIEFING BY SWAPO DELEGATION (AND HE CONSULTED HIS NOTES
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TO VERIFY HIS RECOLLECTION), HE UNDERSTOOD SWAPO WAS WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH A GENERAL REFERENCE TO WALVIS BAY AS OUTSIDE THE TERMS OF THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS.

3. ELABORATING ON THE POINT ABOUT LOCATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY FORCES, LEGWAILA SAID HE UNDERSTOOD SOUTH AFRICA HAD, CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS UNDERSTANDING, ASKED FOR TROOPS TO BE

STATIONED AT EIGHT POINTS ALONG THE BORDER WITH ANGOLA, I.E., THAT SAG DENIED ACCEPTING TWO BASES. LEGWAILA INSISTED THAT SWAPO WAS READY TO ACCEPT SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES AT OSHIVELLO AND GROOT FONTEIN. HE ADDED THAT FRONTLINE WAS PREPARED TO INSIST ON SWAPO ACCEPTANCE.

4. LEGWAILA'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT, BECAUSE OF BOTHA'S WALKOUT AND INTEMPERATE PERFORMANCE ON NATIONAL TV, SWAPO HAD WON A "GREAT PUBLIC RELATIONS VICTORY". GOB TAKES THE VIEW THAT SAG SENSED THAT AN AGREEMENT WAS WITHIN REACH IN VIEW OF SWAPO'S FLEXIBLE APPROACH, AND THAT BOTHA WALKOUT WAS SAG DEFENSE IN PREVENTING AGREEMENT FROM BEING REACHED. BY WALKING OUT SAG PRESERVES ITS OPTION OF "INTERNAL SETTLEMENT".

5. ABOVE DEMARCHE WAS MADE PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF REF B. WE HAVE CONVEYED THE ADDITIONAL POINTS TO LEGWAILA. HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT DISCUSSIONS ARE CONTINUING BUT SKEPTICAL AS TO POSSIBILITY OF REGAINING THE MOMENTUM OF NEW YORK TALKS. NORLAND

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